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Inspective and toxicological survey of the poisoned baits and bites

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Highlights

- A retrospective analysis of poisoned baits is proposed.
- A total of 336 baits were analysed and the presence of toxic substances was confirmed in 72.
- An important prevention system should be activated to prevent such poisoning phenomena.

Abstract

Cases of intentional animal poisonings are still widespread in Italy, even if the improper or malicious use of poisoned baits is banned. This represents a serious threat to pets as well as wildlife species, but also an environmental and human health concern. A retrospective study was performed based on baits sent for toxicological analysis to the laboratories of Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale del Mezzogiorno (IZSM) in Southern Italy over a five year period. Analyses were carried out by using different analytical techniques in relation to the toxicants. Results show a trend different from other countries, as well as from that reported for Northern Italy. The molluscicide metaldehyde proved to be the most common substance detected in our laboratory (63.9%) followed by organochlorine insecticides (29.2%), organophosphine insecticides (11.1%) and anticoagulant rodenticides (9.7%). Other rodenticides, such as strychnine and zinc phosphide were detected only one time in baits. Among the organochlorine insecticide, endosulfan (both alpha and beta isomers)

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